



**Richard M. Daley**  
Mayor

**Department of Police • City of Chicago**  
3510 South Michigan Avenue • Chicago, Illinois 60653

**Terry G. Hillard**  
Superintendent of Police

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20 March 2003

Council Member Sharon McPhal  
Detroit City Council  
Coleman A. Young Municipal Center  
2 Woodward Ave., Suite 1340  
Detroit, Michigan 48226

Re: Missing Person Procedures & Personnel Questionnaire

Dear Council Member McPhal:

Your letter of inquiry was referred to me by Superintendent of Police, Terry Hilliard. Thank you for considering our Missing Person Procedure as a successful model. I hope that the compiled information has sufficiently answered your questions on our Missing Person Procedures and that it will greatly assist you in the development of your Missing Person system.

A copy of the Chicago Police Department's General Order 98-5, entitled "Missing/Found Persons," has been enclosed to answer questions 6, 7, and 11. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at (312) 745-6352.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Roberta M. Bartik".

Roberta M. Bartik  
Commander  
Juvenile Advocacy Section

enc: A copy of General Order 98-5

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**TITLE: MISSING/FOUND PERSONS**

**ISSUE DATE: 14 July 1998**

**EFFECTIVE DATE: 15 July 1998**

**DISTRIBUTION: B**

**RESCINDS: GENERAL ORDER 79-6**

**I. PURPOSE**

This order outlines Department policies and procedures for the investigation of missing or found persons.

**II. POLICY**

- A. A prompt response to a missing person report is critical in locating the missing subject and identification of key evidence and/or witnesses. There is no established time limit for a person of any age to be missing before that subject can be reported missing; however, preliminary investigators will use discretion in taking reports of missing adults (see definition of "Missing Adult" below for guidance).
- B. Missing tender age children and the elderly are always considered at risk. Special considerations and extraordinary measures must be taken in investigating such cases.
- C. A Missing/Found Person Case Report (CPD-11.407) will be made for residents of the City of Chicago and visitors to the City who are missing under unusual circumstances. Complainants who are visitors to the City will be instructed to also report such cases to the local police agency whose jurisdiction covers the missing person's permanent residence.

**III. DEFINITIONS**

The following definitions will apply for the purposes of this order:

**Missing Juvenile:** A person younger than seventeen years of age whose whereabouts are unknown by a person having the responsibility for his welfare.

**Missing Adult:** Any person seventeen years of age or older whose:

- (1) whereabouts are unknown by close family members, friends, or associates, and

- (2) absence is unaccounted for and unusual circumstances exist surrounding the absence.

**NOTE:** Reports of missing adults will not be taken unless unusual circumstances exist. The reporting member will ensure the report is signed by the complainant.

**Found Person:** An individual of any age who is found and not cognizant of his whereabouts and cannot make contact with a responsible person having a concern for his welfare. This includes persons who, due to a weakened or impaired physical or mental condition, are unable to contact a responsible person having a concern for their well being.

**Located Person:** Any person previously reported missing whose whereabouts are verified.

**Drowning Victim:** A person reported as having drowned regardless of whether a body is recovered. If the body is recovered, a Hospitalization Report will be completed. If the body is not recovered, a Missing/Found Person Case Report will be completed.

The following are considered "**High Risk**" missing persons:

**Missing Tender Age Child:** Any child under the age of ten whose whereabouts are unknown by a person having the responsibility for his welfare.

**Disabled Missing:** A missing person who, due to a mental/physical disability or senility, is an immediate danger to himself or others if not located.

**Endangered Missing:** A person who is missing under circumstances indicating his physical safety may be in danger.

**Catastrophe Victim:** A person who cannot be located and is presumed to be injured, killed or displaced as a result of a catastrophe.

**Elderly Missing:** Any missing person sixty-five (65) years of age or older.

#### **IV. GENERAL INFORMATION - MISSING PERSONS**

A. When the Office of Emergency Communications (OEC) receives a request for police service regarding a missing person, the OEC personnel will:

1. inquire whether the missing person is an adult. If the missing person is adult and is a "high risk" subject, a district field unit will be dispatched to conduct the preliminary investigation.

2. If there are no circumstances which would warrant the immediate dispatch of a district field unit, the caller/complainant will be instructed to proceed to a district facility to complete a report. Exceptions will be made if conditions exist which make it difficult for the complainant to do so (e.g. children, disability, etc.).

**NOTE:** If the OEC determines that the missing person is a juvenile, a district field unit will be dispatched to conduct the preliminary investigation.

3. ensure that the Youth Investigations Division, Missing Persons Section is notified of any Immediate Emergency Plans that are implemented.
4. determine if the caller/complainant is reporting that a missing person has been located/returned. If so, the complainant will be informed to call the Missing Persons Section of the Youth Investigations Division.

**NOTE:** If the located/returned person was the victim or perpetrator of a crime, or a tender age child, then a district field unit will be dispatched to conduct the preliminary investigation.

**B. The preliminary investigating officer will:**

1. verify that the individual is missing. If possible, the member will conduct interviews of individuals present at the location from which the individual is reported missing.

**NOTE:** If the location where the missing was last seen is outside of the reporting district, the preliminary investigator will contact a supervisor before taking any action beyond the district boundaries.

2. advise the complainant that it would assist the preliminary investigation if a contact person were available at all times, including having someone remain in the missing person's residence to notify the Department in the event the missing returns. The complainant will also be advised that the Youth Investigations Division, Missing Persons Section should be notified immediately if the missing person is located.
3. complete a Missing/Found Person Case Report for each missing person and obtain a Records Division (RD) number for each report.
  - a. When the subject of a missing person complaint returns or is located **before** the preliminary investigator has obtained an RD number, the member will prepare a Miscellaneous Incident Exception Report (CPD-11.419), summarizing the circumstances. The preliminary investigator, however, should not delay in completing a Missing/Found Person Case Report once the missing person complaint has been found to be bona fide.

- b. When the subject of a missing person complaint returns or is located during the preparation of the Missing/Found Person Case Report and an RD number has been obtained, the reporting officer will explain the circumstances in the narrative portion of the case report. Additionally, the reporting officer will contact the Youth Investigations Division, Missing Persons Section to make all necessary notifications.
- 4. document all search activity in the Missing/Found Person Case Report to avoid unnecessary duplicative efforts by follow-up or assisting personnel.
- 5. notify a field supervisor for incidents involving missing tender age children, juveniles or "high risk" missing subjects, informing the supervisor of the unit assigned, of any unusual circumstances and the complainant's address.
- 6. immediately request the dispatch of a "flash message" of a "high risk" missing subject's description.
- 7. have the complainant sign the case report in the space provided. In the event the complainant refuses to sign, the preliminary investigator will mark "Refused" in the complainant signature space.
- 8. make all notifications required by this directive.
  - a. A notification will be made to Operations Command for all missing person incidents that are potentially newsworthy or when unusual circumstances exist, in accordance with the Department directive entitled, "Operations Command and Assistant Deputy Superintendents for Operational Services."
  - b. Immediate notification will be made to the district watch commander(s) of all affected district(s) concerning all "high risk" subjects.
  - c. An immediate notification will be made to the Youth Investigations Division, Missing Persons Section for **all** missing subjects.
  - d. Formal flash messages via the Citywide 3 dispatcher are required for all "high risk" missing persons.
- C. The supervising sergeant will:
  - 1. respond to all "high risk" missing person assignments.
  - 2. if necessary, coordinate a formal and systematic search for "high risk" missing subjects including:
    - a. designating a particular search area for each unit;

- b. requesting additional personnel as needed;
    - c. determining whether the premises where the subject was last seen and, if applicable, the subject's home have been **thoroughly** searched;
    - d. maintaining a chronological log of all investigative strategies and all units assigned.
  - 3. ensure all required notifications are made, including a notification to the district watch commander for all "high risk" missing persons.
  - 4. ensure that all required notifications are made including notifications to the district watch commander(s) of all affected district(s) concerning all "high risk" subjects.
  - 5. determine if support services may be utilized. If appropriate, request the necessary services including, but not limited to:
    - a. air support which is available through the Illinois State Police and the Chicago Fire Department. Members should consult the Department directive entitled "Illinois State Police Helicopter Program" and the Department directive entitled "Helicopter Support For Police Operations" for guidance.
    - b. the Department's Canine Unit which is available for searches. The Department directive entitled "Canine Teams" should be consulted.
    - c. additional district personnel such as gang tactical and tactical units. When available, tactical personnel will be used to assist in any systematic search for missing "high risk" subjects.
  - 6. determine if any unusual circumstances exist or any additional resources are needed for locating missing juveniles. The supervising sergeant will direct the preliminary investigator accordingly.
- D. The district watch commander will:
- 1. ensure that the Youth Investigations Division, Missing Persons Section is contacted concerning the status of missing subjects, prior to continuing or expanding investigations into the missing person's whereabouts.
  - 2. ensure the district watch commander for the on-coming watch is:
    - a. notified of any "high risk," juvenile, or newsworthy missing persons who have not been located, and
    - b. furnished with copies of all reports pertinent to the investigation.

1. The Missing Persons Unit, as part of the Juvenile Advocacy Section, which is in turn part of the Detective Division, has no individual budget for itself. It is hoped that by providing answers to your other questions you will be able to determine any approximate manpower or equipment needs necessary for your department based on volume of cases.
2. The Juvenile Advocacy Section consist of the Administrative Procedures Unit, Records Control Unit, and the Missing Persons Unit.

Three (3) Investigators are assigned to the Missing/Found Persons case management. Their duties include the following:

- read and process all preliminary missing/found person case reports for completeness and proper notification.
- review supplementary investigative reports for accuracy, thoroughness and proper investigative conclusions.
- review, approve, and ensure data entry of original case reports into CHRIS (criminal history record information system).
- communicate with Area Investigators on a daily basis to disseminate information.
- provide investigative expertise when responding to inquiries from the public and other department units.
- monitor and relate the status of all sensitive/newsworthy missing/found person investigations to command personnel at headquarters.
- prepare monthly reports summarizing the status and quality of current investigations to the Commander of the Juvenile Advocacy section.

(1) Investigator assigned as the Missing Person Liaison

- initiate CHRIS and permanent hard copy record inquiries for detective division personnel relative to unidentified homicide or death investigations.
- correspond with outside law enforcement who have requested assistance with missing/found person investigations.
- augment field investigators in gathering information about missing persons and assist in the development of community bulletins, flyers, and media releases.
- evaluate and chart dental records for entry into NCIC

(1) Investigator assigned as Missing Person/Unidentified Person Coordinator

This investigator serves as the liaison with the Juvenile Advocacy Section and the Detective Forensic Detail. The investigator has the responsibility of cross matching missing person investigations with unidentified deceased persons. Duties include the following:

- coordinate efforts with Area personnel to compare unidentified deceased persons (approximately 350 per year) with missing persons investigations. The investigator initiates contact with complainants to compare possible matches.

- compile listings of deceased persons at the Medical Examiner's Office and initiate record checks via the Hot Desk and CHRIS to determine possible matches.
- supplement the Detective Division Forensic Detail in the resolution of unidentified deceased person cases.
- disseminate facsimile messages, photographs, and descriptions of unidentified deceased persons to Area Investigators for comparison to open cases.
- function as a liaison with hospitals and social agencies in an effort to learn the identity of persons hospitalized or confined to institutions whose identities are not known.

The Missing Persons Control Desk is manned 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Three (3) Police Officers are required on each watch daily to properly operate the Missing Person Control Desk which receives all reports of missing persons and notification of their return. Their daily responsibility are the following:

- receive information and notification on missing/ found persons from beat officers initiating reports.
- complete missing/returned person notification forms and enter the notification information into CHRIS.
- forward follow-up investigation assignments to Area field investigators.
- make notifications to supervisors and command personnel on immediate action, tender age, and newsworthy missing/found person investigations.
- enter all information into the Hot Desk and LEADS computer systems as soon as possible.
- advise field personnel and the public as to the proper procedures for reporting missing persons.
- respond to inquiries regarding the current status of a reported missing.
- provide services on all watches 365 days per year.

After receipt of a missing person notification, the case is assigned to a detective area for investigation. The city of Chicago is divided into five (5) geographical areas. Each detective area is headed by a commander and consists of a Homicide/Sex Unit, Robbery/Burglary Unit, and a Special Victims Unit. All missing person cases are assigned to investigators in the Special Victims Unit. In addition to missing person cases, the Special Victims Unit will investigate any offenses involving family (except sex) and process all juvenile arrests. City-wide the budgeted strength of the Special Victims Unit is approximately 250 Investigators.

3. In general, there are no district level costs or manpower assignments associated with the recovery of missing persons.

4. Statistics for the year 2002 show that a total of 20,757 missing and found person investigations were initiated. The current clearance rate for missing person cases is approximately 99 %.

5. The breakdown of missing/found person cases is as follows:



<b>Missing Adults</b>	<b><u>7230</u></b>	<b>Juveniles (0-9 yrs )</b>	<b><u>915</u></b>	<b>Juveniles (10-16 yrs)</b>	<b><u>12265</u></b>
Males	3961	Males	526	Males	4982
Females	3269	Females	389	Females	7283
		<b><u>Found</u></b>	<b><u>347</u></b>		
		Adults	210		
		Juveniles	137		

6. & 7. A copy of the Chicago Police Department General Order 98-5 is attached for your review.

8. Current efforts are underway to make improvements to the department's web-site to feature more missings. An effort is underway to develop a liaison with the Department of Children and Family Services. Many of our juvenile missings are wards of the state and efforts continue to develop information sharing procedures.

9. District beat officers respond to the Office of Emergency Communication (911) calls of missing persons. Beat officers have the responsibility for completing the initial report and making the proper notifications. In cases of "high risk" or "tender age missings", the beat officer or their supervisor may implement a plan. Depending on the plan, a specific number of district personnel will be assigned to search for the missing in addition to the assigned Investigator. Investigators and district personnel may also work together in requesting the community's help by passing out bulletins or community alerts.

10. The majority of cases and leads on any case would be tracked by computer. If a hand written original report is generated, data entry personnel will enter pertinent information into the Criminal History Records Information System (CHRIS). After entry into CHRIS, all subsequent reports will be computer generated. Because some cases have been ongoing for several years or pre-CHRIS, manual files are still available and are used occasionally.

11. A copy of General Order 98-5 has been attached for your review.